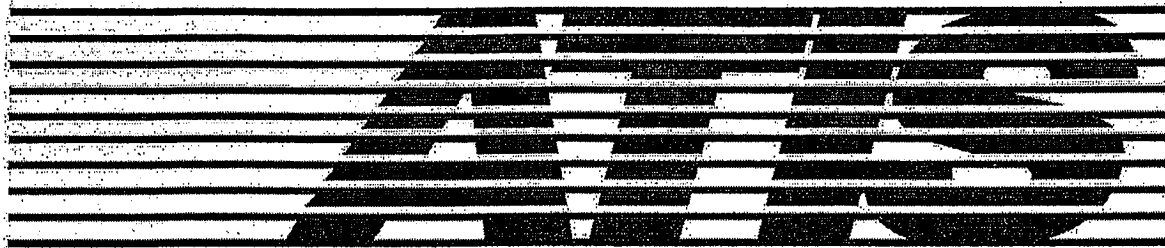


Exhibit

MPC_1



Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions

ATIS Standard

ATIS-0300037

Intercompany Responsibilities Within the Telecommunications Industry, Issue 3

(Formerly NIIF 0015)

INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENTS

OVERVIEW

For calls to originate and terminate within the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), numerous companies must interface and must physically "interconnect" with each other. Interconnection is NOT automatic. Agreements must be established between ALL physically interconnecting companies.

In addition to agreements developed between companies that physically interconnect with each other, agreements are often needed with ALL other local exchange carriers to complete a local or toll call.

Companies entering the industry or a new service area need to be keenly aware of this. Companies already established in an area need to also be aware that, due to the ever-changing network and companies involved, interconnection agreements are not static.

Interconnection agreements are contracts that must be established. Depending on the type of interconnection involved, the specific companies involved, and other related factors, it is possible for agreements to take several months, and sometimes longer, to establish.

Specific requirements for interconnection agreements may also vary from company to company, for example, Access Service Request (ASR) and Service Inquiry/CSPS (wireless) processes.

Tandem Switch

A tandem switch connects one trunk to another and serves as a trunk concentration and distribution function to minimize direct end office interconnection. A tandem switch is an intermediate switch or connection between an originating switch and the final switch call destination. A tandem switch does not allow origination or termination of telephone calls. Tandems serve a designated geographic area consisting of specific rate centers.

Tandem Homing Arrangements

There are three levels of regulatory jurisdictions and six types that define tandem homing arrangements.

Local

A Local Exchange Carrier (LEC) switching system specifically identified as a local tandem which provides a traffic concentration and distribution function for local traffic originating and/or terminating within a local calling area as defined in the state tariffs on file with the appropriate

regulatory body. A local tandem provides trunk-to-trunk connections to more than one end office within a local calling area.

Intra-LATA

An intra-LATA tandem switch connects one trunk to another and serves as a trunk concentration and distribution function of intra-LATA toll traffic to minimize direct end office interconnection. Intra-LATA tandem traffic can be either intrastate intra-LATA or interstate intra-LATA as defined in the tariffs on file with the appropriate regulatory body. An intra-LATA switch is a switch that completes billable toll messages that originate and terminate within the same LATA.

Inter-LATA

An inter-LATA tandem switch connects one trunk to another and serves as a trunk concentration and distribution function of inter-LATA toll traffic to minimize direct end office interconnection. The inter-LATA tandem serves as the Access Tandem that provides distribution of originating and terminating traffic between subtending end offices and Interexchange Carriers (IXC).

Intermediate

Independent Operating Companies can provide an Intermediate Tandem between end offices and the LATA Access Tandem. The design of the Intermediate Tandem must be done so that it poses no impediment to the Inter-LATA Toll Network. The Intermediate Tandem follows the United States Telecom Association (USTA) specification TID 93-002, "The Intermediate Tandem Interconnection Consideration With Access Tandems".

Operator Services Tandem

An Operator Services (OS) tandem switch serves as the concentrated distribution point for providing a host of services that may include toll and intercept. The OS tandem is an integral part of the network as it performs alternate billing services, automated coin telephone service, AMA teleprocessing, and automatic call distribution for operator handling of calls.

9-1-1 Tandem

A 9-1-1 tandem provides trunk-to-trunk connections between end offices and a switch that serves Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

INTERCONNECTION RELATIVE TO NXX ASSIGNMENTS

The following factors regarding interconnection agreements **MUST** be considered in the determination of a valid NXX effective date:

- The time to establish interconnection agreements between ALL applicable companies.

- Once an agreement is in place, the time needed for the completion of the actual provisioning of the specific network facilities involved to permit interconnection.
- Once facilities have been provisioned, the time needed for the actual completion of trunk group turn-up.

If delays are incurred in the interconnection process, the NXX effective date may need to be renegotiated with the industry Code Administrator¹. If such effective dates are not appropriately renegotiated there is a high probability that calls will be blocked on the original effective date.

REPORTING OF INTERCONNECTION ARRANGEMENTS

Once a valid effective date is determined, the NXX, valid switch, and supporting homing arrangement information must be entered in a timely manner into the Telcordia[®] Business Integrated Routing and Rating Database System (referred to as BIRRDS), which is operated and maintained by Telcordia TRA, for notification to other carriers via the Telcordia[®] LERG Routing Guide and related output from this database. Delays in entering this data will increase the probability of calls being blocked on the effective date (See Troubleshooting Section).

Homing arrangements entered into the BIRRDS must be valid and denote connectivity between the two switching entities for the function(s) indicated. Hence, when a switching entity indicates that it subtends or homes on a given tandem, that becomes a confirmation that there is interconnection between the two entities. On a terminating basis, the homing tandem is considered the "last choice" for completing traffic destined for the switching entity.

Incorrect homing arrangements entered into the BIRRDS will ultimately result in blocked calls destined for a switching entity. For example, the BIRRDS data entries for a switching entity indicate that the switch homes on a particular local tandem when in fact, it does not. The local tandem company will, in all probability, know how to correctly route calls, which originate from its own subscribers. Other companies, however, will route the calls to the local tandem in accordance with LERG entries. The local tandem will block the calls, since there is no connectivity between the local tandem and the terminating switching entity. Likewise, there may not be interconnection between the local tandem and a toll tandem owned by the same company. Once the calls reach the local tandem there is nowhere for the local tandem to terminate the traffic, and it will be blocked.

¹ The industry Code Administrator for the U. S. and its territories is the North American Numbering Plan Administration group (www.nanpa.com). For Canada, the code administration functions are managed by the Canadian Numbering Administrator (<http://www.cnac.ca/>). Code Administration responsibilities for Bermuda and the NANP countries in the Caribbean vary.